

# INK\*

FREE  
LIKE WE ALL  
SHOULD BE



A COLLECTIVE  
VIEW OF  
MODERN SOCIETY

# .IN\*

WELCOME TO THE FIFTH ISSUE OF .IN\*! IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE WE'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR OVER A YEAR. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT. IT'S NICE TO KNOW YOU'RE APPRECIATED, YOU KNOW?

THANKS TO ALL OF THE ARTISTS AND WRITERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ISSUE. WE'RE LUCKY TO HAVE SUCH CREATIVE PEOPLE IN OUR MIDST.

AND THANK YOU TO THE ADVERTISERS. YOU ARE TRULY MAKING IT HAPPEN. ALL OF THE CONTRIBUTORS APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT.

READERS, PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS HEROES AREN'T HARD TO FIND, THE COMEDY ZONE, SINGLE CELL PRODUCTIONS, RHINO MARKET & DELI AND PINKY'S WESTSIDE GRILL. THEIR GENEROSITY HELPS .IN\* GET PRINTED AND OUR WRITERS AND ARTISTS TO GET PAID.

AND HELP US WELCOME ABOARD ASSORTED TABLE WINE SHOPPE, VISART VIDEO, EASTSIDE LOCAL EATERY, ARMADA SKATE SHOP AND TOMMY'S PUB WHO ALLOWED US TO ADD MORE PAGES OF COMIC BOOK GOODNESS TO THIS ISSUE.

1,000 COPIES OF .IN\* ARE PRINTED EVERY QUARTER, AND IT IS DISTRIBUTED ALL OVER CHARLOTTE, IN ASHEVILLE, GREENSBORO, WILMINGTON AND ATLANTA. IF YOU DON'T SEE IT, DEMAND IT! EVEN IF YOU'RE AT YOUR DENTIST'S OFFICE. (YOU NEVER KNOW. WE'VE BEEN KNOWN TO DO A LITTLE GUERILLA DISTRIBUTION TOO.)

PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA. EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS!

OKAY, WE'RE NOT QUITE SO UNDERGROUND ANYMORE. .IN\* IS NOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA.



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DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS AND BACK ISSUES.



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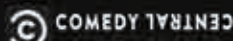


EXACTLY  
ONE SONG  
LATER...





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# Mundane Wizardry

By EMILY CLANCY

In 2020 I resolve  
to dream...  
and to dream  
without resolve



In 2020, I promise not to limit myself to dreams I can accomplish

LIKE, THAT  
RECURRING  
DREAM  
WHERE I JUST  
HOLD MY  
BREATH AND  
LEVITATE  
AWAY FROM  
MY HATERS

ALSO FREE OF  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
ADDICTION



READS ALL BOOKS  
SEES EVERY MOVIE

FINISHES COMMISSIONS,  
INKS SUBMISSIONS,  
MAKES BOATLOADS OF  
COMICS, GOES TO  
ALL THE EXPOS

NOT SO  
MANY  
HATERS  
ANYWAY



I'LL ALSO THROW A  
DINNER PARTY AND  
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN IF  
EVERYONE GETS ALONG.

AND I'LL START A LEFTOVERS PICKUP  
SERVICE THAT REDISTRIBUTES THE  
UNEATEN WHERE IT WILL BE EATEN,







# A SIDEWALK PURRING

by Alex Lippert



I got a question for you. So, what's the meaning of life? Like, what's the point of being here?



There is no "POINT" to being here. Life is a long line with dips and curves forever onward



So if life is a line and you being dead and all, are you ahead of the line or the end of the line?



End of the line? No. I've crossed the line



Feb 08  
2020

# PURGATORY



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# A PORTRAIT OF THE JOURNALIST

I've been a writer  
for nearly my entire life.  
I make most of my money  
by writing horror.

I don't think a lot of people  
realize this now,  
but I started my career  
as a comedy writer.

I also can't stand  
horror as a genre.  
The Texas Chainsaw  
Massacre, Friday The 13th,  
the like..

...none of that  
really ever did  
anything for me.

I don't want to write about  
the Overlook Hotel, or Room  
302. I don't want to write  
about a world filled with  
anxiety and dread.

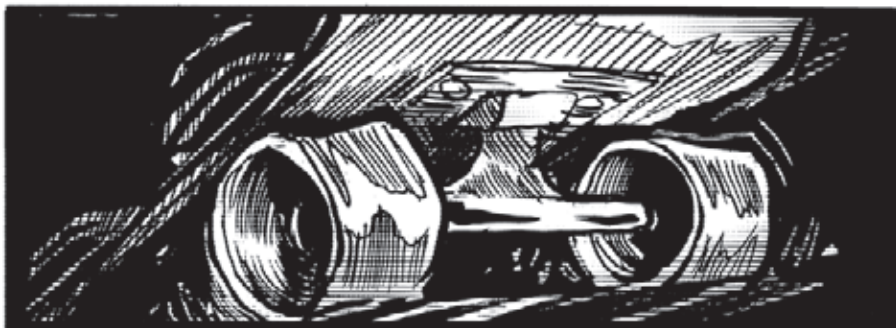
I just live in one,  
and I write what I know.



I've worked night shifts quite often in the various lives I've lived outside of writing. As I'm dreaming this script up in my head, I'm riding my skateboard to the bakery I work at. It's one of two day jobs I have. I don't own a car. I can't afford one.



I can't afford health insurance either, and haven't had access to any kind of medication for years. I know the sounds of the wheels scraping the pavement aren't as loud as they feel they are, but they still feel that way. I know the sounds I don't hear aren't there, but I still feel like I can hear them.



I know, in some shape in the back of my mind, that that shadow that I think I see outside of the reach of the tactical flashlight that I hold with a dead man's grip doesn't exist. I'm conscious of the vibrations of the board and the chill of the wind, but I'm somewhere else, as I always am, and every single bump in the busted concrete that the city refuses to repair flashes me back and forth from unreality to reality to unreality again.



Silent Hill is one of the few horror franchises I can actually bring myself to enjoy, as it's focused on the inner world more so than hell-bent on decimating the outer. There are horrors, yes, but they are familiar--there is no "other" beside yourself, no "terror" save the savage company of your fellow civilized man and the walls of the house.



The "Abstract Daddy" of Silent Hill II always sticks out to me, as a trauma survivor and as one raised in the psychosexual chains of a strict Lutheran upbringing--its writhing form consisting of two human figures entwined in the violence of lust, blaspheming the concepts of kinship and trust, destroying the positive connotation of the very idea of love in a mass of blood and writhing flesh. These days, I sleep alone. I try not to keep a lover around. I don't talk to what little family I had, and I try not to find a new one.



I decorate my desks with angel statues. Waterhouse's paintings of women grace my phone's lock screen, Bissont's lovers adorn my tablet. I am fully aware of the idealization of the feminine, the Madonna/whore complex, the absurdity of the divine. I am also keenly aware of the body horror that lies inside of my bathroom mirror. Problematic though they may be, I'd rather look at the statue.



I didn't ask to write horror, didn't want to spend my career opining about my mental illness, my trauma, my dysphoria. Then again, I don't recall asking to be born, either.



There are some things we are asked to do which we do not wish to do, and we simply do them because we must--to communicate to those who do not wish to hear, to give strength to others when we have none left to give, to give light when we would rather close our eyes and rest a while. Fool's errands, but necessary ones.



I didn't want to be a horror writer. Hell, I didn't want to write speculative fiction, or fiction at all. Ironically, I wanted to be a journalist, or a detective--to uncover the truth, to use my pen to tell the world about that which we as a society try to hide.



I guess, to some degree, I am one.



## '21st Century Youth Culture'





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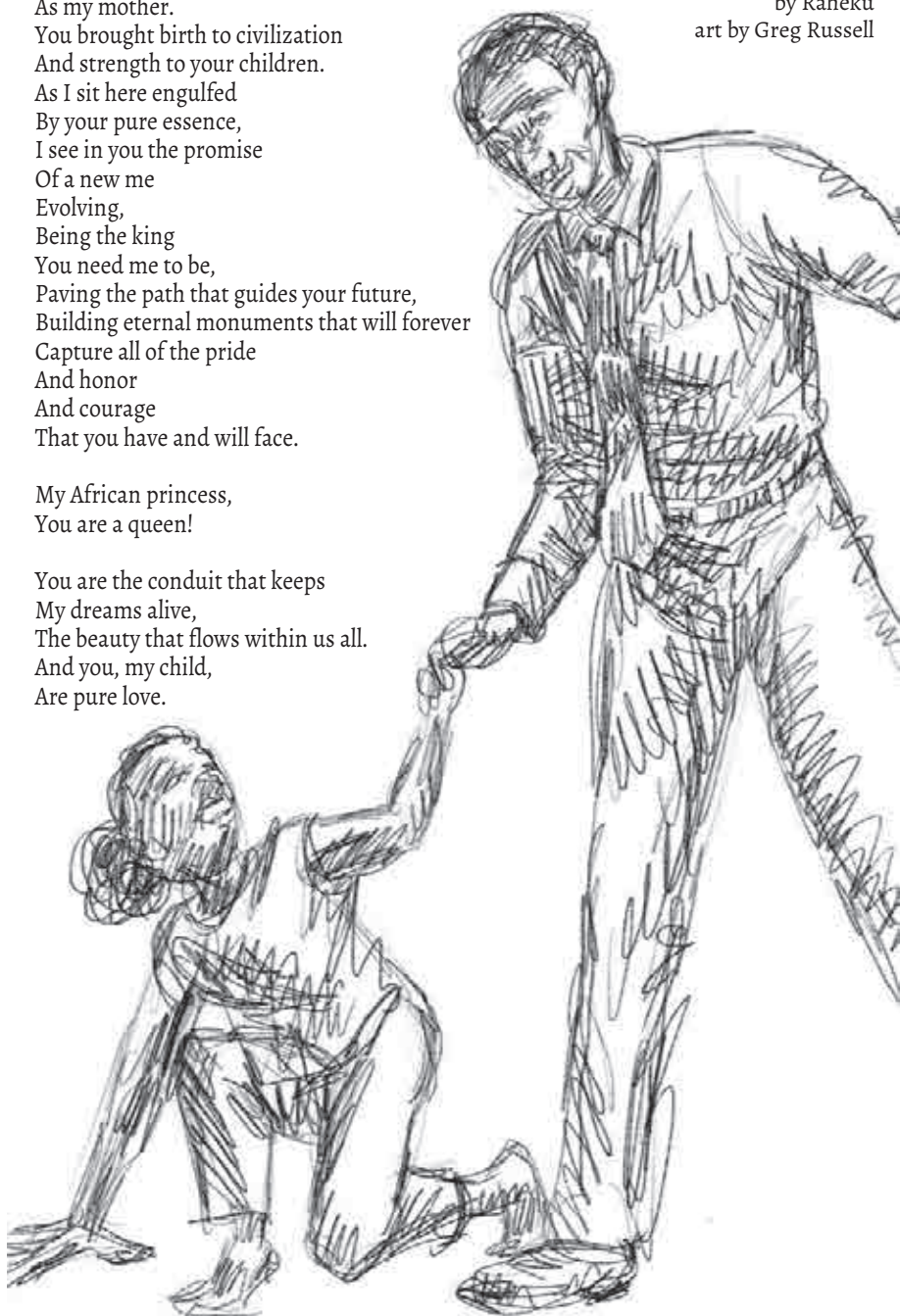
# My African Queen

With back erect and strong,  
You are my child as well  
As my mother.  
You brought birth to civilization  
And strength to your children.  
As I sit here engulfed  
By your pure essence,  
I see in you the promise  
Of a new me  
Evolving,  
Being the king  
You need me to be,  
Paving the path that guides your future,  
Building eternal monuments that will forever  
Capture all of the pride  
And honor  
And courage  
That you have and will face.

My African princess,  
You are a queen!

You are the conduit that keeps  
My dreams alive,  
The beauty that flows within us all.  
And you, my child,  
Are pure love.

by Raheku  
art by Greg Russell





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# Whine Gut by Ani Todd





(SIGH) OF COURSE I LOVE YOU BUT DO YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT'S BEEN TRYING TO STUFF YOU INTO A PAIR OF PANTS?! THEN I HAVE TO PARADE AROUND AND ACT LIKE THE WAISTBAND WON'T CUT ME IN HALF.

SO YES, I WILL CONTINUE TO EXERCISE AND CUT BACK ON THE WINE.

I DO THESE THINGS BECAUSE I CARE ABOUT YOU AND I WANT YOU TO BE HEALTHY.

(SNIFF) REALLY?

THAT'S NOT HOW THIS WORKS, WINE GUT!

AWESOME! AND THEN ONE DAY I'LL BE IN SUCH GOOD SHAPE THAT I'LL BE ABLE TO DRINK EVEN MORE WINE!

# 13TH FLOOR BLUES

BY GREG RUSSELL



ON THE 13TH DAY OF THE MONTH OF MAY, MCGRUBER AND HIS WIFE HAD A SPAT.

HE FOOLED AROUND WITH EVERY WOMAN IN TOWN, AND HE LANDED ON THE PAVEMENT WITH A SPLAT.

HIS WIFE WENT TO JAIL,  
AND HE WENT TO HELL

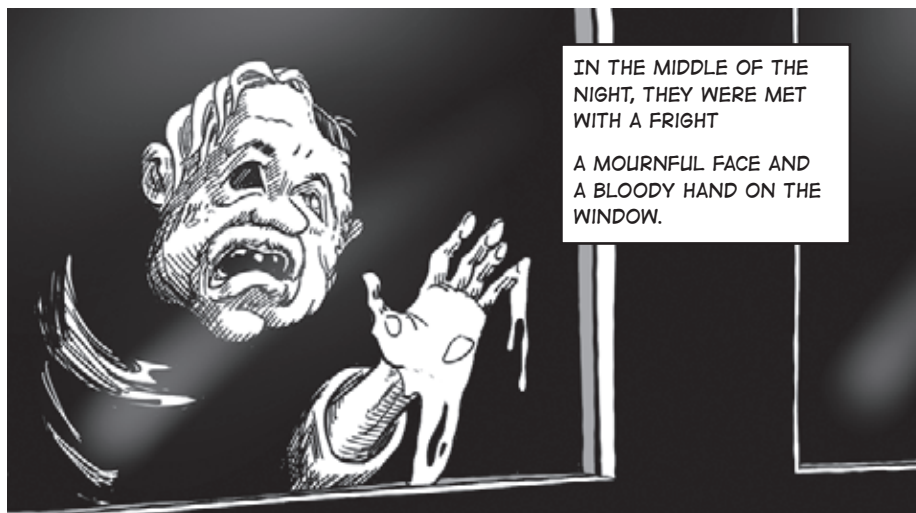
'CAUSE HE WAS A DICK,  
LACKING EVERY FORM OF  
GRACE.



NEWLYWEDS  
SOFIA AND  
RHONDO MOVED  
INTO THE CONDO

NOT KNOWING  
WHAT HAPPENED  
IN THAT UNHOLY  
PLACE.





IN THE MIDDLE OF THE  
NIGHT, THEY WERE MET  
WITH A FRIGHT

A MOURNFUL FACE AND  
A BLOODY HAND ON THE  
WINDOW.

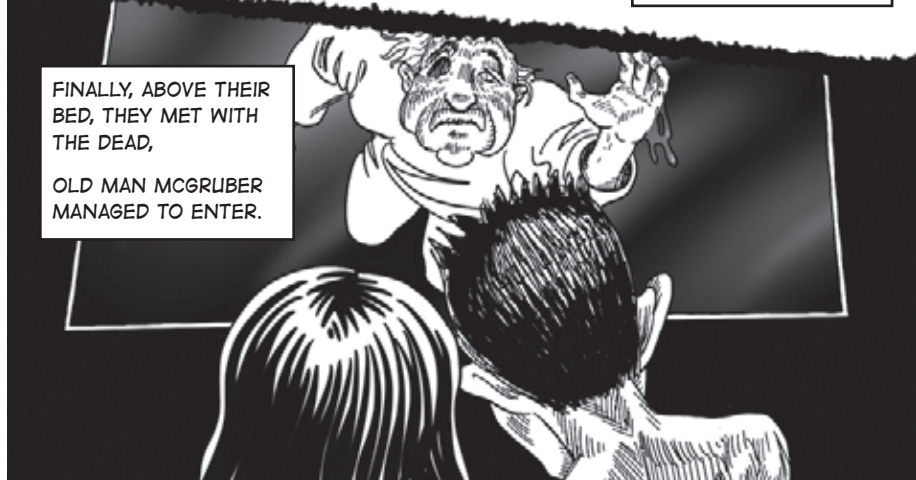


NIGHT AFTER NIGHT,  
THEY WERE MET WITH  
THAT SIGHT,

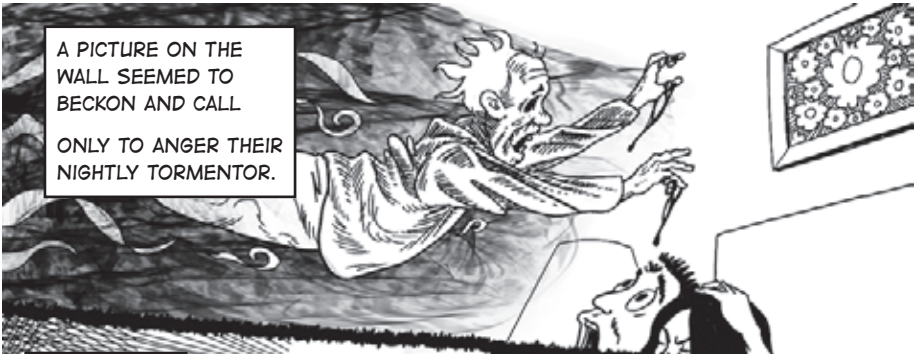
"LET ME IN!" MOANED  
THE DIRTY OL' GRINGO.

FINALLY, ABOVE THEIR  
BED, THEY MET WITH  
THE DEAD,

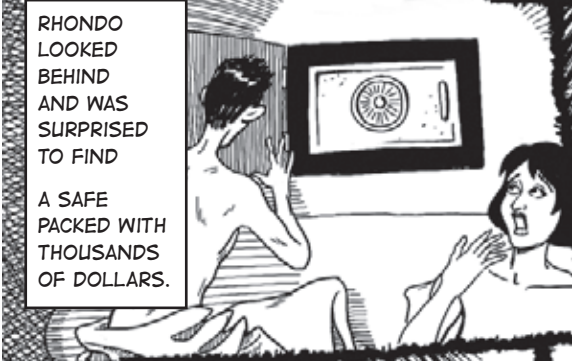
OLD MAN MCGRUBER  
MANAGED TO ENTER.







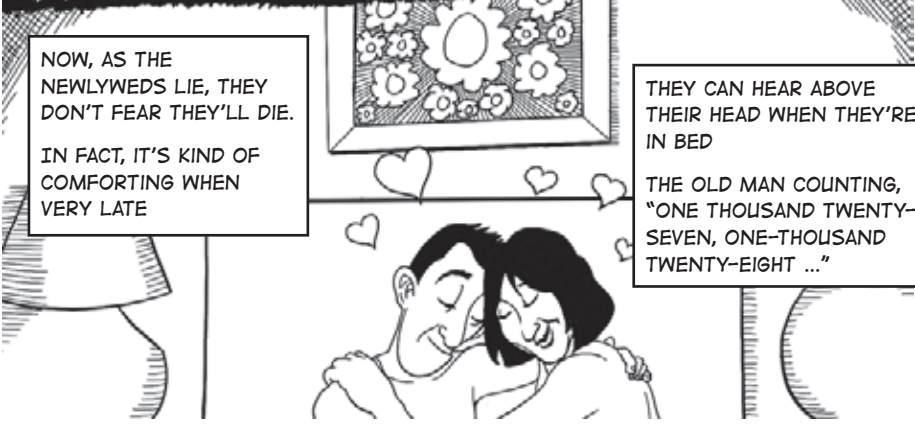
A PICTURE ON THE  
WALL SEEMED TO  
BECKON AND CALL  
ONLY TO ANGER THEIR  
NIGHTLY TORMENTOR.



RHONDO  
LOOKED  
BEHIND  
AND WAS  
SURPRISED  
TO FIND  
A SAFE  
PACKED WITH  
THOUSANDS  
OF DOLLARS.



MCGRUBER WENT IN  
AND WAS HAPPY AS SIN,



RHONDO SHUT HIM IN AS  
HE SHRIEKS AND HOLLARS.

NOW, AS THE  
NEWLYWEDS LIE, THEY  
DON'T FEAR THEY'LL DIE.  
IN FACT, IT'S KIND OF  
COMFORTING WHEN  
VERY LATE

THEY CAN HEAR ABOVE  
THEIR HEAD WHEN THEY'RE  
IN BED

THE OLD MAN COUNTING,  
"ONE THOUSAND TWENTY-  
SEVEN, ONE-THOUSAND  
TWENTY-EIGHT ..."





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Goo and Roo is a comic strip about two well-meaning but completely incompetent angels who got themselves busted to Earth because they were just too annoying, Goo the cockeyed optimist, and Roo, the antisocial crank.

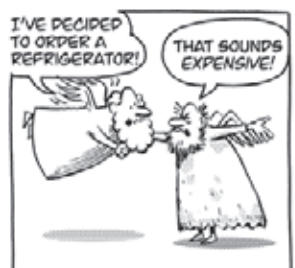
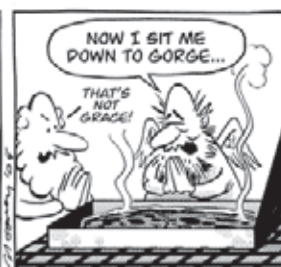
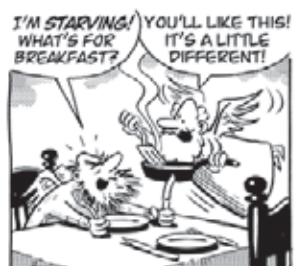
# GOO AND ROO

By Gerry Mooney

They have to figure out for themselves how to get back home. Unfortunately, neither one of them has a clue; they only have each other!

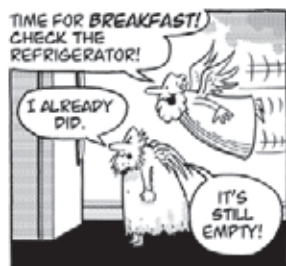


© Gerry Mooney Studio



© Gerry Mooney Studio





I ALREADY DID.

IT'S STILL EMPTY!



OOH!



OKAY, BUT LARGE CAPACITY.



ROO'S PERSONAL "CIRCLE OF LIFE"...



IT DOES, DOESN'T IT...



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## .IN\* ISSUE #5 CONTRIBUTORS



### P. 1 OPPRESSION

#### JERRY KIRK ARTIST

KIRK IS AN AWARD-WINNING ARTIST LOCATED IN CHARLOTTE. HIS WORK IS IN PRIVATE COLLECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. HE IS ALSO ONE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE HISTORIC N. DAVIDSON ST. ART DISTRICT KNOWN AS "NODA." FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SEE MORE ART, VISIT THE OFFICIAL SITE: [WWW.JERRYKIRK.COM](http://WWW.JERRYKIRK.COM)



### P. 3 WHEN YOU'RE FAMOUS YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT ...

#### CHARLOTTE ZINGER WRITER/ARTIST

ZINGER IS THE PRODUCT OF ROMANTIC INTERCOURSE BETWEEN TWO CONSENTING AND MARRIED HOMO SAPIEN ADULTS. SHE REQUIRES OXYGEN, AS WELL AS WATER, CALORIC INTAKE AND VARIOUS DRUGS TO FUNCTION. ZINGER IS A FEMALE BIOLOGICALLY HUMAN ENTITY AND UTILIZES HER WAKING TIME TO EXECUTE A PLETHORA OF ARTISTIC ENDEAVORS.



### P. 4 EXACTLY ONE SONG LATER

#### HENRY EUDY WRITER/ARTIST

ACCORDING TO HIS INSTAGRAM PROFILE, EUDY IS A WIZARD. A TRUE STAR. YOU CAN FIND SAID INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT AT [HENRY\\_EUDY](https://www.instagram.com/henry_eudy).



### P. 6 ANTI-VAXXERS

#### KARLA HOLLAND WRITER/ARTIST

HOLLAND IS A GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND CARTOONIST IN WILMINGTON, NC. WHEN NOT COMPLETING A PROJECT, SHE CONTEMPLATES ART'S NAVAL ON INSTAGRAM @THEGORGONTRANSPLANT"



### P. 8 MUNDANE WIZARDRY

#### EMILY CLANCY WRITER/ARTIST

AN ANALYST IN GREENSBORO BY DAY, LAST YEAR CLANCY FOUND HERSELF CARVING OUT TIME FOR ART BY DRAWING COMICS INTO THE NIGHT. WORK MAKES HER LATE FOR THE LIMITLESS THINGS SHE LOVES: URBAN SKETCHING, ABSTRACT PAINTING AND MAKING THINGS WITH HER DAUGHTER. FIND MORE OF HER WORK ON INSTAGRAM AT @MUNDANEWIZARDRY.



### P. 10 A SIDEWALK PURRING

#### ALEX LIPPERT WRITER/ARTIST

LIPPERT IS AN EXPERIMENTAL PHOTOGRAPHER, ILLUSTRATOR AND A MUSICIAN BURNING THE CANDLE AT BOTH ENDS.





**P. 12 A PORTRAIT OF THE JOURNALIST**

**SARAH ALLEN REED** WRITER/ARTIST

BORN WITH A DECIDEDLY DIFFERENT NAME AND ASSIGNED GENDER NEAR SAINT LOUIS, MO, REED PICKED UP A PEN AT THE AGE OF EIGHT AND DREW HER FIRST COMIC BOOK. HER WORK DEALS WITH LOSS, TRANS AND QUEER ISSUES, HER OWN BATTLES WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND HOMELESSNESS, AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAUMA AND RELIGION. SHE CURRENTLY RESIDES SOMEWHERE IN COLORADO; ALTHOUGH, AS WITH EVERYTHING ELSE IN LIFE, THIS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. VIST HER AT [SARAHALLENREED.COM](http://SARAHALLENREED.COM)

**P. 16 21ST CENTURY YOUTH CULTURE**

**JERRY KIRK** WRITER/ARTIST



**P. 18 MY AFRICAN QUEEN**

**RAHEKU** WRITER

RAHEKU IS A CREATOR OF MANY TALENTS INCLUDING POETRY. SHE IS ORIGINALLY FROM LIBERIA AND COMES TO CHARLOTTE VIA LONG ISLAND AND PHILADELPHIA.



**GREG RUSSELL** WRITER/ARTIST

RUSSELL IS A TRUE CHARLATAN, BORN AND RAISED IN CHARLOTTE. HE IS A GRAPHIC DESIGNER, ILLUSTRATOR, PHOTOGRAPHER, WEB DESIGNER, WRITER AND EDITOR, BUT HIS FAVORITE THING TO DO IS DRAW COMICS. SEE EXAMPLES OF HIS WORK AT [GREGRUSSELL.US](http://GREGRUSSELL.US)



**P. 20 WHINE GUT**

**ANI TODD** WRITER/ARTIST

CHARLOTTE ARTIST TODD SPECIALIZES IN 2-DIMENSIONAL WORKS IN PEN, PENCIL, OIL AND CHALK PASTEL. A STORYTELLER BY NATURE, SHE WROTE AND ILLUSTRATED HER OWN COMICS STARTING IN ELEMENTARY THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL. HER WEBCOMIC "TALES FROM A SKETCHY ARTIST," CREATED IN 2018, ILLUSTRATES THE HUMOROUS ENCOUNTERS FOUND IN HER DAILY LIFE'S JOURNEY.SEE MORE OF HER ART AT [TALESFROMASKETCHYARTIST.COM](http://TALESFROMASKETCHYARTIST.COM)

**P. 22 13TH FLOOR BLUES**

**GREG RUSSELL** WRITER/ARTIST



**P. 26 GOO AND ROO**

**GERRY MOONEY** WRITER/ARTIST

MOONEY IS A NEW YORK COMMERCIAL ARTIST AND ILLUSTRATOR WHO HAS RETIRED TO CLAREMORE, OK, WITH HIS WIFE, PLAYWRIGHT VICKI LYNN MOONEY. GERRY CREATED GOO AND ROO IN 2005 IN AN UNSOLD BID FOR SYNDICATION. HE CONTINUES TO WORK ON PERSONAL PROJECTS AND THE OCCASIONAL FREELANCE WORK. CONTACT HIM AT [GERRY@MOONEYART.COM](mailto:GERRY@MOONEYART.COM).

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